

(19)



Europäisches Patentamt

Eur pean Patent Office

Office uropéen des brevets



(11)

EP 0 922 785 A2

(12)

## EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:  
16.06.1999 Bulletin 1999/24

(51) Int. Cl.<sup>6</sup>: **C23C 22/10**, C23C 22/40,  
C23C 22/42, C23C 22/23,  
C25D 11/36, C25D 11/00

(21) Application number: 99200045.5

(22) Date of filing: 22.10.1997

(84) Designated Contracting States:  
DE FR GB IT

(30) Priority: 30.10.1996 JP 30356296  
09.05.1997 JP 13452697

(62) Document number(s) of the earlier application(s) in  
accordance with Art. 76 EPC:  
97308418.9 / 0 839 931

(71) Applicant:  
Nihon Hyomen Kagaku Kabushiki Kaisha  
Tokyo (JP)

(72) Inventors:  
• Hideo, Susa,  
c/o Nihon Hyomen Kagaku K. Kaisha  
Tokyo (JP)

• Masaaki, Yamamuro,  
c/o Nihon Hyomen Kagaku K. K.  
Tokyo (JP)  
• Mitsuomi, Katori,  
Nihon Hyomen Kagaku K. Kaisha  
Tokyo (JP)

(74) Representative:  
Swindell & Pearson  
48 Friar Gate  
Derby DE1 1GY (GB)

### Remarks:

This application was filed on 11 - 01 - 1999 as a  
divisional application to the application mentioned  
under INID code 62.

(54) Treating solution and treating method for forming protective coating films on metals

(57) A metallic surface treating solution character-  
ized in that it is an aqueous solution at pH 0.1 to 6.5  
comprising a source of at least one selected from the  
group consisting of Mo, W, V, Nb, Ta, Ti, Zr, Ce, Sr, and  
trivalent chromium, an oxidizing substance source, and  
an oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or its anhy-  
dride, a surface treating method using the treating solu-  
tion, and metals thereby treated on the surface.

+ Oxidant + Oxyacid + org. acid  
(d.3)

EP 0 922 785 A2

## Description

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 [0001] This invention generally relates to a surface treating solution for zinc, copper, nickel, silver, iron, cadmium, aluminum, magnesium, and their alloys, a method of applying surface coatings, and coated metallic materials. The invention specifically relates to a surface treating solution and a treating method for forming protective coating films on zinc- and zinc alloy-coated iron parts, and surface treated metallic materials.

10 [0002] There are various films as protective coating films on zinc copper, nickel, silver, iron, cadmium, aluminum, magnesium, and their alloys. However, no such film that corresponds to any according to the present invention has been found yet, and this invention provides newly discovered coating films. The most common of corrosion-preventive methods in use for iron articles and parts is coating with zinc or zinc alloy (hereinafter called "galvanizing"). Galvanized iron articles and parts, if used as they are, would readily form a zinc white rust. To avoid this, they are usually provided with a protective coating film over the galvanized surface. Protective coating films that are conventionally used on zinc 15 coat are formed by phosphate and chromate treatments. Chromate treatment is divided into three types; electrolytic, coating, and reaction type chromate treatments. These treatments are applicable not only to zinc but also to aluminum, cadmium, magnesium, and their alloys.

[0003] Phosphate treatment is a process, as taught in Patent Application Kokai No. 3-107469, which comprises immersing an object to be coated in a treating solution which consists essentially of zinc ion and phosphate ion as film- 20 forming components and fluoride ion or complex fluoride ion as an etching or film-densifying agent, heated to 40 to 50°C or up to about 75°C, thereby forming a coating film on the object, water washing, and then drying the coated object. The surface of the coating film thus obtained is very rough with the needle crystals of zinc phosphate piled up. This surface condition helps improve the adhesion of paint and enhance the corrosion resistance of the painted surface, achieving the dual purpose of the film. However, the film before painting is seriously short of rust-inhibiting capacity (cor- 25 rosion resistance). Moreover, the surface as treated looks dull gray to grayish white and lacks ornamental effect. Since the treated surface is not aesthetically attractive, it is not suited for articles that are partly or wholly unpainted. Phosphate films essentially contain fluoride ion or complex fluoride ion without which they cannot be formed, but either ion is strongly corrosive and comes in the list of substances under emission control. High treating temperature, and extra equipment and cost for heating are additional disadvantages.

30 [0004] On the other hand, chromate film before painting is superior to phosphate film in corrosion resistance. However, chromate treatment has recently caused growing concern, because of the adverse effects upon the human beings and the environments of the treating solution that necessarily uses poisonous hexavalent chromium and also because of the chromium itself that dissolves out of the treated articles. This is an insurmountable problem since chromate film essentially depends on the hexavalent chromium for its corrosion resistance. Another knotty problem that is always 35 associated with electrolytic chromate treatment in which a chromate film is formed by electrolysis is the problem of throwing power, especially with workpieces of components naturally of far intricate configurations than steel sheets. In addition, the mist of chromic acid that results from the electrolysis can cause more serious environmental pollution than other known processes. Coating type chromate treatment comprises applying an acidic aqueous solution essentially containing chromic acid to a metallic surface and, without water washing, drying the coated surface with heat. Like elec- 40 trolytic chromating, the coating type is not suited for workpieces of complex configurations. Moreover, the process has its limitation on the uniformity of coating film thickness. This combines with the omission of water washing to make the treated surface as uneven as with the phosphate film. The coated film, therefore, is unable to satisfy the users' aesthetic requirements when used alone and, like the phosphate film, it is commonly employed as a mere undercoat. Reaction type chromate treatment, by contrast, is often adopted as finish coating as well as undercoating because of the uniform 45 appearance and stable corrosion resistance of the coating film. It has the unsettled pollution problem of hexavalent chromium, however.

[0005] The present invention has for its object to form protective coating films which combines a uniform, good appearance and corrosion resistance on the surfaces of zinc, copper, nickel, silver, iron, cadmium, aluminum, magne- 50 sium, and their alloys, without using noxious hexavalent chromium or strongly corrosive fluorine compounds. A particularly important object is to provide protective coating films on galvanized iron articles other than steel sheets, for which coating type treatment on an industrial scale has hitherto been practically difficult.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

55 [0006] With a view to solve the problems of the prior art, the present inventors have concentrated their efforts and have now successfully obtained coating films that apparently do not belong to the ordinary category of phosphate films or chromate films. It has now been found possible to produce coating films having beautiful, bright appearance and outstanding corrosion resistance, without using hexavalent chromium, by a method which comprises forming a film on a

metallic surface either by immersion in or electrolysis with a treating solution characterized in that it is an aqueous solution at pH 0.1 to 6.5 comprising a source of at least one selected from the group consisting of Mo, W, V, Nb, Ta, Ti, Zr, Ce, Sr, and trivalent chromium, an oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or an anhydride thereof, and an oxidizing substance source, water washing, and drying. It has also been found that protective coating films with enhanced corrosion resistance can be obtained by water washing a film formed by immersion or electrolysis and, without drying, bringing the washed film into contact with a resin or inorganic colloid. The coating films obtained in accordance with the invention have been found to exhibit great high-temperature corrosion resistance, thus solving a problem common with ordinary chromate films, weakened corrosion resistance upon heat treatment. It is another feature of the inventive method that, when the treatment is performed by immersion, an existing equipment for reaction type chromate treatment can be utilized to an economic advantage.

#### BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE DRAWING

[0007]

FIG. 1 is an electron micrograph showing the surface texture of a coating film formed in Example 1 of the present invention; and

FIG. 2 is an electron micrograph showing the surface texture of a coating film formed in Example 3 of the invention.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The present invention will now be described in detail. The treating solution according to the invention is an aqueous solution at pH 0.1 to 6.5 comprising a source of a metallic cation, oxymetallic anion or the like of Mo, W, V, Nb, Ta, Ti, Zr, Ce, Sr, or trivalent chromium, oxidizing substance source, an oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or its anhydride, and an oxidizing substance source. Although the exact behavior of each component is unknown, a source of any of various metals such as molybdate ion, tungstate ion, vanadate ion, niobate ion, tantalate ion, or trivalent chromium ion and an oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or its anhydride are presumed to be components that form the skeleton of a coating film. An oxidizing substance presumably inhibits the ionization in a solution of the oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or its anhydride and ensures the stability of the solution while, at the same time, properly etching the metal and promoting smooth film formation.

[0009] In the case of alloy substrates that have particularly strong possibilities of hampering uniform coating film formation, the absence of an oxidizing substance often makes the film unable to exhibit satisfactory performance. This can cause phenomena such as the inability of forming a thick film due to difficulty of etching or of forming a uniform appearance owing to uneven etching and the consequent failure of obtaining a levelled film surface, and localized chemical synthesis for film formation in certain areas and no film formation in the remainder. The presence of an oxidizing substance that controls these phenomena varies in performance, five to more than ten times, depending on its proportion to the composition of the treating solution, and therefore a proper amount of such a substance must be used.

[0010] The total amount of the metal source, such as molybdate ion, tungstate ion, vanadate ion, niobate ion, tantalate ion, or trivalent chromium ion, ranges from 0.2 to 300 g/l, preferably from 0.5 to 80 g/l. If the amount is less than the range, a good film is difficult or impossible to obtain. If any, a too thin film is formed to attain desired performance. If the amount is more than the range, marred film appearance and brightness and/or a material economic loss due to excessive dipping out can result. The source is not specially limited, while ammonium vanadate, sodium tungstate, chromium acetate, and chromium nitrate are cited as examples.

[0011] The amount of the oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or its anhydride to be contained should be from 0.2 to 200 g/l, preferably from 3 to 90 g/l. If the amount is below the range, it is difficult or impossible to obtain a good film, or a too thin film is formed to attain desired performance. If the amount is over the range, the film appearance and brightness are marred and/or the economic loss due to excessive dipping out can increase materially.

[0012] As for an oxyacid of phosphorus, not only orthophosphoric acid but also hypophosphorous, pyrophosphoric, tripolyphosphoric, and perphosphoric acids and the like can be used. If such an oxyacid is used in the form of a metallic salt, both a metal and an oxidizing substance can be supplied. The amount to be contained is between 0.2 and 400 g/l, preferably between 2 and 100 g/l. An insufficient amount would make the resulting solution or the film-forming rate instable, but an excessive amount would cause much economic loss due to wasteful dipping out. It would sometimes happen in either case that no coating film is formed.

[0013] A pH from 0.1 to 6.5 is desired, a narrower range from 1.0 to 4.0 being preferred. If the pH is too low a uniform film is difficult to obtain, but if it is too high, the corrosion resistance tends to decrease to some extent. Chemicals to be used for pH adjustment are not specially limited, usually nitric or sulfuric acid or the like being used when the pH is too high or an alkali such as ammonia or sodium hydroxide being added when it is too low.

[0014] There is no special limitation to the treatment conditions for the formation of coating film by immersion. The

treatment may be conducted under a broad range of conditions, e.g., the conditions for ordinary reaction type chromate treatment (bath temperature = 20~30°C; treating time = 20~60 sec.; with stirring) or such conditions that treating time = 250 sec., without stirring. The conditions for film formation by electrolysis are: current density = up to 30 A/dm<sup>2</sup>, preferably 0.5~3 A/dm<sup>2</sup>; duration of current flow = 1~1200 sec., preferably 30~180 sec. Even with a lower current density a film is formed, but under the invention the film formation not necessarily depends on electrolysis, and whether a film has been formed by electrolysis or by reaction is hardly discernible. Hence it is impossible to set the lower limit to the current density. When the density is too high, a surface defect known as "burn" or "scorch" develops in the portion subjected to the excessive current density. When the treating time is too short, a film is not formed or, if any, the film is too thin and inferior in corrosion resistance. When the treating time is too long, a dull surface defect sometimes results. Also, the excessive treatment seriously reduces the productivity.

[0015] After a coating film has been formed in the manner described above, the film is washed with water. The washing removes surplus matter to provide a uniform surface. Unlike phosphate film and coated chromate film, the film according to the invention has a uniform, bright appearance. Mere drying after the water washing affords the film the appearance and corrosion resistance that satisfy user requirements. Where higher corrosion resistance is a necessity, the film formed by the treatment of the invention may be painted or additionally coated as desired. Conventionally, chromate treatment or phosphate film treatment has been used to form a prime coat for painting. Either treatment ends with drying as the final step. If the surface yet to be dried is painted or otherwise treated, a sound composite film will not result. Under the invention, by contrast, it has been found possible to paint or otherwise coat the film formed by immersion or electrolysis and water washed, without being dried up. This is remarkably effective for the improvement in productivity, because, for one thing, it eliminates the expenses and labor required for the prime coat line (drying step) and for the conveyance of workpieces between painting and coating lines that are otherwise required for conventional processes and, for the other, there is no need of waiting for the temperature drop of the treated surface that has been made hot by drying.

[0016] The treating solution may further contain one or two or more substances chosen from among alkaline earth metals, inorganic colloids, silane coupling agents, and organic carboxylic acids.

[0017] Usable as inorganic colloids are silica sol, alumina sol, titania sol, zirconia sol, and the like, and as silane coupling agents are vinyltriethoxysilane,  $\gamma$ -methacryloxypropyl-trimethoxysilane, and the like.

[0018] Although it is rather unthinkable that an alkaline earth metal should precipitate in a coating film, the fact that its addition improves the corrosion resistance implies its effectiveness in densifying the film structure.

[0019] The addition of an inorganic colloid, silane coupling agent and the like is not always warranted for cost and other reasons. However, such substances improve the adhesion of the film when it is to be painted or otherwise coated after the treatment of the invention, thus enhancing the corrosion resistance of the finished surface.

[0020] The use of an acidic aqueous solution as defined by the invention renders it possible to form an insoluble, solid film over a zinc surface without the aid of noxious hexavalent chromium or highly corrosive fluoride, sometimes using the same equipment, conditions, and method for treatment as the conventional reaction type chromate treatment. This helps solve the health problems including the concern of general users about the escape of hexavalent chromium from ordinarily treated materials, the concern of personnel engaged in the production of chromate and treatment with it and who have been exposed to noxious chromic acid, and the environmental concern about the adverse effects upon wildlife.

[0021] The method of the invention is similar to two known methods, chromate treatment and phosphate treatment. However, it does not seem to fall under either category when diversified factors, e.g., the composition of the solution, appearance of the treated surface, anti-corrosion mechanism, and treatment conditions, are taken into consideration. Chromate treatment is a generic term of treatment procedures using an aqueous solution that contains hexavalent chromium, typified by chromic acid. The coating film thereby formed depends on its hexavalent chromium content for its corrosion resistance. Considering this definition, the method of the invention that does not use hexavalent chromium is not a chromate treatment. Since the resulting film does not contain hexavalent chromium, its anti-corrosion mechanism is not dependent upon the hexavalent chromium content in the film, and hence the film is not a chromate one. As a chromate free from hexavalent chromium, trivalent chromate is described in *Products Finishing*, 52 [9], 71 (1988). The corrosion resistance of the coating film so obtained lasts, in a salt spray test, at most 35 to 40 hours (until 5% zinc white rust is formed). Thus the corrosion resistance of an ordinary trivalent chromate film is only about one quarter to one-fifth that according to the present invention. It is presumed that a trivalent chromate film (film structure or anti-corrosion mechanism), like a conventional hexavalent chromium-containing chromate film, depends on the hexavalent chromium ion concentration in the film for its corrosion resistance, and that is why the film attains such low corrosion resistance. The facts presented above indicate that the film according to this invention differs from conventional chromate films in anti-corrosion mechanism and that the method of the invention is not a chromate treatment.

[0022] Phosphate treatment on zinc, as described in above-mentioned Patent Application Kokai No. 3-107469, is a treatment which comprises immersing a workpiece into a treating solution which consists essentially of zinc ion and phosphate ion as film-forming components and fluoride ion or complex fluoride ion as an etching agent (chemical syn-

thesis reaction initiator) or film-densifying agent and heated to 40~50°C or up to the vicinity of 75°C, thereby forming a coating film on the workpiece, water washing, and drying the coated workpiece. The treatment of the present invention differs from the phosphate treatment in the composition of the solution and in the treating method. In respect of the composition the solution of the invention is utterly different in that it does not require zinc as a film-forming element and fluoride ion or complex fluoride ion as an etching agent. Without these components a phosphate film would not be formed. Also, compared with the phosphate treatment that requires heating to 40~75°C for film formation, the present invention can carry out the treatment at ordinary temperatures (20~25°C). Thus the two differ in treatment condition too. A comparison in performance shows that a phosphate film looks grayish white and possesses corrosion resistance of not more than 24 hours before it forms zinc white rust in a salt spray test, whereas the film of the invention is uniform and bright in appearance and exhibits corrosion resistance of more than 120 hours before zinc white rusting starts in a salt spray test. Phosphate coating treatment is usually followed, for added corrosion resistance, by immersion into a dilute aqueous solution of chromic acid, a treatment known as sealing or aftertreatment. Even after this additional treatment, the coating film retains corrosion resistance for less than 24 hours, before zinc white rust is formed.

[0023] It should be clear from electron micrographs of coating films formed in accordance with the invention in FIG. 1 (Example 1) and FIG. 2 (Example 3) that the films are dissimilar to phosphate films. Compared with a phosphate film that is covered completely with needle crystals [*JITSUMU HYOMEN GIJUTSU* (Practical Surface Technologies), Vol.35, No. 1, p.23, Photo 2 (1988)], the films of the invention show no discernible crystal on the surface.

[0024] As described above, the treatment according to the present invention is entirely different from conventional phosphate or chromate coating film treatment, when they are compared and studied in diversified aspects including the bath composition, anti-corrosion mechanism, surface configurations, treating conditions, and appearance of the treated surfaces.

[0025] The invention is illustrated by the following examples. Tests were conducted with test specimens that had been properly pretreated with degreasing, dip in nitric acid, etc., in the following way. Evaluations of the results were made with regard to the appearance and corrosion resistance and summarized in Table 1.

#### Example 1

[0026] A galvanized iron piece (measuring 50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion for 90 seconds in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 18 g chromium nitrate, 20 g 75% phosphoric acid, and 15 g 67.5% nitric acid, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 1.8 with ammonia. The coated piece was water washed and dried as a test specimen.

[0027] Its appearance was visually examined and its corrosion resistance was evaluated from the result of a salt spray test (JIS Z 2371) conducted for 120 hours.

#### Example 2

[0028] A test specimen obtained by the procedure of Example 1 was heat treated at 200°C for one hour to provide a test specimen.

[0029] Its appearance was visually inspected and its corrosion resistance was evaluated from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

#### Example 3

[0030] A galvanized iron piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion for one minute in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 5 g ammonium tungstate, 15 g chromium nitrate, 25 g 75% phosphoric acid, and 25 g 60% nitric acid, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 2.0 with ammonia. The coated piece was water washed and dried as a test specimen.

[0031] Its appearance was visually evaluated and its corrosion resistance from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

#### Example 4

[0032] A galvanized iron piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion for two minutes in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 15 g sodium molybdate, 25 g phosphorous acid, and 25 g 60% nitric acid, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 2.0 with ammonia. The coated piece was water washed and dried, and then immersed in and coated with "Kosmer No. 9001" (made by Kansai Paint Co.) as a test specimen.

[0033] Its appearance was visually evaluated and its corrosion resistance from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

Example 5

[0034] A galvanized iron piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion for two minutes in a treating solution of pH 1.0 which contained 15 g chromium nitrate, 2 g ammonium vanadate, 25 g hypophosphorous acid, and 18 g 60% nitric acid, all per liter. The coated piece was water washed and dried, and then immersed in and coated with "Kosmer No. 9001" (of Kansai Paint Co.) as a test specimen.

[0035] Its appearance was visually evaluated and its corrosion resistance from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

Example 6

[0036] A galvanized iron piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by cathodic electrolysis for two minutes at a current density of 1 A/dm<sup>2</sup> in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 10 g ammonium vanadate, 20 g chromium nitrate, 25 g 75% phosphoric acid, 20 g 62.5% nitric acid, and 20 g colloidal silica, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 2.0 with ammonia. The coated piece was water washed and, without drying, immersed in and coated with "Kosmer No. 9001" (of Kansai Paint Co.) as a test specimen.

[0037] Its appearance was visually evaluated and its corrosion resistance from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

Example 7

[0038] A galvanized iron piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by cathodic electrolysis for two minutes at a current density of 1 A/dm<sup>2</sup> in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 5 g ammonium molybdate, 20 g chromium nitrate, 30 g phosphorous acid, 20 g 62.5% nitric acid, and 20 g colloidal silica, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 2.0 with ammonia. The coated piece was water washed and, without drying, immersed in and coated with "Kosmer No. 9001" (of Kansai Paint Co.) as a test specimen.

[0039] Its appearance was visually evaluated and its corrosion resistance from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

Example 8

[0040] A galvanized iron piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was treated with an aqueous solution of pH 2.5 which contained 8 g 62% nitric acid, 20 g chromium nitrate, and 25 g pyrophosphoric acid all per liter, at a bath temperature of 30°C for 80 seconds. The treated piece was immersed in an aqueous solution of colloidal silica to provide a test specimen. The appearance of the specimen was visually examined and its corrosion resistance was evaluated from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

Example 9

[0041] An aluminum alloy (A1050) piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion for 90 seconds in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 27 g chromium nitrate, 30 g 75% phosphoric acid, and 25 g 67.5% nitric acid, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 1.8 with sodium hydroxide, and water washed and dried as a test specimen.

[0042] Its appearance was visually inspected and its corrosion resistance was evaluated from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

Example 10

[0043] A magnesium alloy (MP1) piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion for two minutes in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 18 g sodium molybdate, 38 g phosphorous acid, and 45 g 60% nitric acid, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 2.0 with sodium hydroxide. The coated piece was water washed, dried, and immersed in and coated with "Kosmer No. 9001" (of Kansai Paint Co.) as a test specimen.

[0044] Its appearance was visually evaluated and its corrosion resistance from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

Example 11

[0045] An iron piece coated with zinc containing 0.01% iron (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion

## EP 0 922 785 A2

for 90 seconds in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 18 g chromium nitrate, 20 g 75% phosphoric acid, and 15 g 67.5% nitric acid, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 1.8 with ammonia. The coated piece was water washed and dried as a test specimen.

[0046] Its appearance was visually inspected and its corrosion resistance was evaluated from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

### Example 12

[0047] An iron piece coated with zinc containing 200 ppm iron (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion for one minute in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 5 g ammonium tungstate, 15 g chromium nitrate, 25 g 75% phosphoric acid, and 25 g 60% nitric acid, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 2.0 with ammonia. The coated piece was water washed and dried as a test specimen.

[0048] Its appearance was visually evaluated and its corrosion resistance from the result of a 120-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

### Example 13

[0049] An iron piece coated with zinc containing 5000 ppm iron (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion for two minutes in a treating solution which was an aqueous solution containing 15 g sodium molybdate, 6 g chromium sulfate, 25 g phosphorous acid, and 25 g 60% nitric acid, all per liter, and adjusted to pH 2.0 With ammonia. The coated piece was water washed and dried and then immersed in and coated with "Kosmer No. 9001" (of Kansai Paint Co.) to provide a test specimen.

[0050] Its appearance was visually evaluated and its corrosion resistance from the result of a 600-hour salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

### Comparative Example 1

[0051] A galvanized iron piece with untreated surface (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was used as a test specimen, and the time it took until zinc white rust was formed in a salt spray test (JIS Z 2371) was measured.

### Comparative Example 2

[0052] A galvanized iron piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by immersion for one minute in a commercially available trivalent chromate treating solution ("Aidip Z-348" of Aiko Chemical Co.), water washed and dried as a test specimen.

[0053] Its appearance was visually evaluated, and its corrosion resistance was determined by measuring the time it took for the formation of zinc white rust in a salt spray test (JIS Z 2371)

### Comparative Example 3

[0054] A galvanized iron piece (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was conditioned on the surface with "Preparen Z" (of Nihon Parkerizing Co.) and was coated with a film by immersion for 15 seconds in a commercially available phosphate film treating solution ("Parbond 3300" of Nihon Parkerizing Co.) heated at 70°C. The coated piece was aftertreated with "Parlen 1" (of Nihon Parkerizing Co.) and dried as a test specimen.

[0055] Its appearance was visually inspected and the time it took for zinc white rusting in a salt spray test (JIS Z 2371) was measured.

### Comparative Example 4

[0056] The same test specimen as used in Example 9 was immersed in an organic coating agent "5G018" (of Nihon Hyomen Kagaku) to serve as a test specimen.

[0057] Its appearance was visually examined and its corrosion resistance was evaluated in terms of the time required for the starting of zinc white rusting in a salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

### Comparative Example 5

[0058] The same test specimen as used in Example 9 was immersed in an aqueous solution of a water-soluble resin "Cymel UFR" (of Mitsui Cytec) to provide a test specimen.

## EP 0 922 785 A2

[0059] Its appearance was visually evaluated and, as for its corrosion resistance, the time required for zinc white rusting in a salt spray test (JIS Z 2371) was measured.

### Comparative Example 6

[0060] The same test specimen as used in Example 10 was immersed in an aqueous solution of a water-soluble resin "Cymel UFR" (of Mitsui Cytec) to serve as a test specimen.

[0061] Its appearance was visually evaluated and its corrosion resistance was determined by measuring the time required for zinc white rusting in a salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

### Comparative Example 7

[0062] An iron piece coated with zinc containing 3500 ppm iron (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was treated with an aqueous solution of pH 1.2 which contained 30 g chromium phosphate and 20 g phosphoric acid, both per liter, for two minutes to form a coating film. The coated piece was water washed and dried as a test specimen.

[0063] Its appearance was visually examined and its corrosion resistance was determined in terms of the time required for zinc white rusting in a salt spray test (JIS Z 2371)

### Comparative Example 6

[0064] An iron piece coated with zinc containing 6500 ppm iron (50 x 100 x 1 mm) was coated with a film by treatment for two minutes with an aqueous solution of pH 1.2 which contained 25 g chromium acetate and 15 g phosphoric acid, both per liter. The coated piece was water washed and immersed in an aqueous solution containing 10% sodium silicate at 30°C for 70 seconds to provide a test specimen.

[0065] Its appearance was visually inspected and its corrosion resistance was determined as the time required for zinc white rusting in a salt spray test (JIS Z 2371).

[0066] The evaluation results of the foregoing examples were as follows.

Table 1

Example	Appearance	Corrosion resistance
Ex 1	Uniform & bright	No zinc white rust in 120 hrs
2	"	"
3	"	"
4	"	"
5	"	"
6	"	"
7	"	"
8	"	"
9	"	5% zinc white rust in 72 hrs
10	"	No zinc white rust in 120 hrs
11	"	"
12	"	"
13	"	No zinc white rust in 600 hrs
Comp 1	-	Entire zinc white rust within 1 hr
2	Uniform & bright	Zinc white rust within 24 hrs
3	Gray-Grayish white	"
4	Not uniform	"
5	-	Zinc white rust within 12 hrs



Table 1 (continued)

Example	Appearance	Corrosion resistance
6	-	"
7	Not uniform	Zinc white rust within 24 hrs
8	Not uniform	Zinc white rust within 60 hrs

[0067] As can be seen from Table 1, the surfaces treated with the treating solutions according to the present invention exhibited excellent corrosion resistance and uniform brightness.

[0068] In forming a protective coating film on the surface of Zn, Ni, Cu, Ag, Fe, Cd, Al, Mg, or their alloy, the present invention permits the formation of a film which combines uniform, good appearance with corrosion resistance, without using any noxious hexavalent chromium or highly corrosive fluorine compound. In particular, the invention makes it possible to form protective films on galvanized iron articles other than steels, which have hitherto been practically difficult to protect by a coating type treatment on an industrial scale.

#### Claims

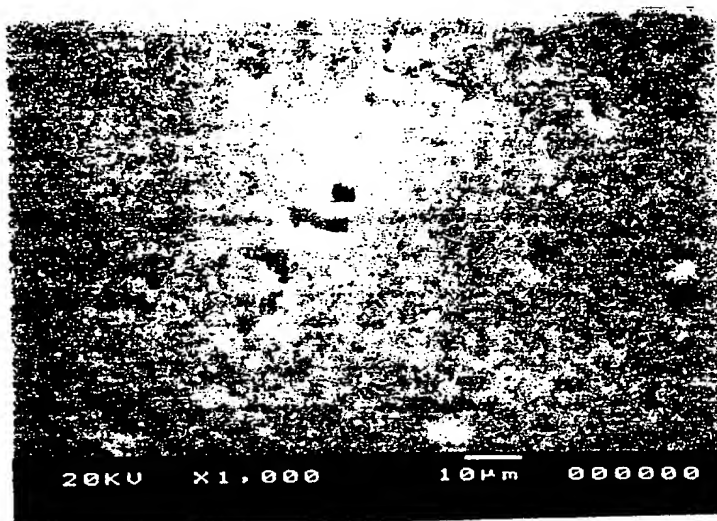
1. A metallic surface treating solution characterised in that it is an aqueous solution at pH 0.1 to 6.5 comprising a source of trivalent chromium, an oxidizing substance source, and an oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or an anhydride thereof.
2. A metallic surface treating solution characterised in that it is an aqueous solution at pH 0.1 to 6.5 comprising a source of at least one selected from the group consisting of trivalent chromium, Mo, W, V, Nb, Ta, Ti, Zr, Ce and Sr, an oxidizing substance source, and an oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or an anhydride thereof.
3. The treating solution of claim 1 or 2 characterised in that the treating solution further comprises one or two or more selected from the group consisting of alkaline earth metals, silicon sources such as silicon dioxide, inorganic colloids such as alumina sol, silane coupling agents, and organic carboxylic acids.
4. The treating solution of claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the oxidizing substance source is selected from the group consisting of peroxides, chloric acid, bromic acid, nitric acid, and salts thereof.
5. The treating solution of any preceding claim wherein the oxyacid of phosphorus is selected from the group consisting of orthophosphoric acid, condensed phosphoric acid, phosphorous acid, hypophosphorous acid, and salts thereof.
6. The treating solution of any preceding claim which provides a protective coating film on the surface of Zn, Ni, Cu, Ag, Fe, Cd, Al, Mg, or an alloy thereof.
7. A method of providing a protective coating film on a metallic surface, characterised by forming a film on a metallic surface using a treating solution according to claim 1, 2, 3, or 5 by immersion and/or electrolysis with current at a density of 30 A/dm<sup>2</sup> or below for a passing time of one to 1200 seconds, with or without agitation.
8. The method of claim 7 characterised in that the protective coating film thus formed is overcoated with an organic, inorganic, or composite corrosion-preventive coating film.
9. The method of claim 8 characterised in that the protective coating film thus formed is water washed and, without being dried, overcoated with an organic, inorganic, or composite corrosion-preventive coating film.
10. The method of any of claims 7 to 9 which provides a protective coating film on the surface of Zn, Ni, Cu, Ag, Fe, Cd, Al, Mg, or an alloy thereof.
11. A protectively coated metal of Zn, Ni, Cu, Ag, Fe, Cd, Al, Mg, or an alloy thereof, characterised in that the metal is coated with either a film consisting essentially of trivalent chromium, and a substance derived from an oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or an anhydride thereof or a film of such a composition further comprising at least one substance selected from the group consisting of substances derived from oxidizing materials and substances derived from alkaline earth metals, silicon and inorganic colloids.

**EP 0 922 785 A2**

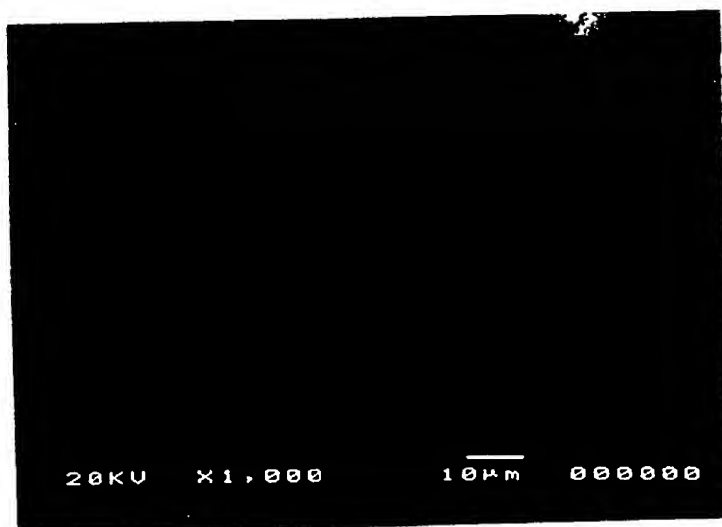
12. A protectively coated metal of Zn, Ni, Cu, Ag, Fe, Cd, Al, Mg, or an alloy thereof, characterised in that the metal is coated with either a film consisting essentially of at least one metal element selected from the group consisting of trivalent chromium, Mo, W, V, Nb, Ta, Ti, Zr, Ce, and Sr, and a substance derived from an oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or an anhydride thereof or a film of such a composition further comprising at least one substance selected from the group consisting of substances derived from oxidizing materials and substances derived from alkaline earth metals, silicon, and inorganic colloids.

13. The protectively coated metal of claim 11 or 12 characterised in that the protective coating film is overcoated with an organic, inorganic, or composite corrosion-preventive coating film.

EP 0 922 785 A2



*Fig 1*



*Fig 2*



(19)



Eur päisches Patentamt

Eur pean Patent Office

Office européen des brevets



(11)

**EP 0 922 785 A3**

(12)

**EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(88) Date of publication A3:  
08.12.1999 Bulletin 1999/49

(51) Int. Cl.<sup>6</sup>: **C23C 22/10**, C23C 22/40,  
C23C 22/42, C23C 22/23,  
C25D 11/36, C25D 11/00

(43) Date of publication A2:  
16.06.1999 Bulletin 1999/24

(21) Application number: 99200045.5

(22) Date of filing: 22.10.1997

(84) Designated Contracting States:  
DE FR GB IT

(30) Priority: 30.10.1996 JP 30356296  
09.05.1997 JP 13452697

(62) Document number(s) of the earlier application(s) in  
accordance with Art. 76 EPC:  
97308418.9 / 0 839 931

(71) Applicant:  
Nihon Hyomen Kagaku Kabushiki Kaisha  
Tokyo (JP)

(72) Inventors:

- Hideo, Susa,  
c/o Nihon Hyomen Kagaku K. Kaisha  
Tokyo (JP)
- Masaaki, Yamamuro,  
c/o Nihon Hyomen Kagaku K. K.  
Tokyo (JP)
- Mitsuomi, Katori,  
Nihon Hyomen Kagaku K. Kaisha  
Tokyo (JP)

(74) Representative:  
Swindell & Pearson  
48 Friar Gate  
Derby DE1 1GY (GB)

(54) **Treating solution and treating method for forming protective coating films on metals**

(57) A metallic surface treating solution characterized in that it is an aqueous solution at pH 0.1 to 6.5 comprising a source of at least one selected from the group consisting of Mo, W, V, Nb, Ta, Ti, Zr, Ce, Sr, and trivalent chromium, an oxidizing substance source, and an oxyacid or oxyacid salt of phosphorus or its anhydride, a surface treating method using the treating solution, and metals thereby treated on the surface.

**EP 0 922 785 A3**



European Patent  
Office

## EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 99 20 0045

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
X	EP 0 034 040 A (BNF METALS TECH CENTRE) 19 August 1981 (1981-08-19) * claims 1-7,11,17 *	1,2,4-8, 10-13	C23C22/10 C23C22/40 C23C22/42
Y	* claims 1-7 *	3	C23C22/23 C25D11/36 C25D11/00
Y	GB 2 097 024 A (HOOKER CHEMICALS PLASTICS CORP) 27 October 1982 (1982-10-27) * claims 1,6 *	3	
X	US 5 393 354 A (BISHOP CRAIG V) 28 February 1995 (1995-02-28) * column 7, line 25-34; claims 1,2 *	1,2,4-8, 10-13	
X	US 4 149 909 A (HAMILTON ANDREW J) 17 April 1979 (1979-04-17) * example 2 *	1,2,4-8, 10-13	
X	EP 0 694 593 A (PROCOAT S L) 31 January 1996 (1996-01-31) * example 7 *	1,2,4-8, 10-13	
X	DATABASE WPI Section Ch, Week 9402 Derwent Publications Ltd., London, GB; Class E31, AN 94-014365 XP002038536 & SU 1 781 316 A (MAGN MINING METAL INST), 15 December 1992 (1992-12-15) * abstract *	1,2,4-7, 10-12	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6) C23C C25D
X	DATABASE WPI Section Ch, Week 8240 Derwent Publications Ltd., London, GB; Class A97, AN 82-85234E XP002054620 & SU 885 353 B (CIVIL AVIATION INST), 30 December 1981 (1981-12-30) * abstract *	1,2,4-7, 10-12	
-The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 21 April 1999	Examiner TORFS, F
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons</p> <p>&amp; : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

EPO FORM 1503 03.92 (P4C01)



European Patent  
Office

# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 99 20 0045

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IntCl.6)
X	FR 1 300 295 A (SOCÉTÉ CONTINENTALE PARKER) 14 December 1962 (1962-12-14) * claim I; example 3 *	1,2,4-7, 10-12	
A	US 5 415 702 A (BISHOP CRAIG V ET AL) 16 May 1995 (1995-05-16)		
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IntCl.6)
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search <b>THE HAGUE</b>		Date of completion of the search <b>21 April 1999</b>	Examiner <b>TORFS, F</b>
<p><b>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>X: particularly relevant if taken alone  Y: particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category  A: technological background  O: non-written disclosure  P: intermediate document</p> <p>T: theory or principle underlying the invention  E: earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date  D: document cited in the application  L: document cited for other reasons  &amp;: member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P4/C01)



European Patent  
Office

Application Number  
EP 99 20 0045

**CLAIMS INCURRING FEES**

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

- ☐ Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):
- ☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION**

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

- ☐ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.
- ☐ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:
- ☒ None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:

1-13 as far as the metal compound is a trivalent Cr compound





European Patent  
Office

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION  
SHEET B

Application Number  
EP 99 20 0045

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. Claims: 1-  
13 as far as the metal compound is a trivalent Cr compound
2. Claims: 2-  
13 as far as the metal compound belongs to the group of Mo and W
3. Claims: 2-  
13 as far as the metal compound belongs to the group of V, Nb and Ta
4. Claims: 2-  
13 as far as the metal compound belongs to the group of Ti and Zr
5. Claims: 2-13 as far as the metal compound is a Ce compound
6. Claims: 2-13 as far as the metal compound is a Sr compound

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 99 20 0045

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

21-04-1999

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
EP 0034040	A	19-08-1981	AU 6707781 A	31-08-1981
			DK 440881 A	05-10-1981
			WO 8102311 A	20-08-1981
			JP 57500248 T	12-02-1982
-----				
GB 2097024	A	27-10-1982	US 4359345 A	16-11-1982
			US 4359346 A	16-11-1982
			US 4359347 A	16-11-1982
			US 4349392 A	14-09-1982
			US 4367099 A	04-01-1983
			US 4384902 A	24-05-1983
			US 4359348 A	16-11-1982
			AU 541733 B	17-01-1985
			AU 8263482 A	21-10-1982
			BE 892885 A	18-10-1982
			BR 8202218 A	29-03-1983
			CA 1228000 A	13-10-1987
			DE 3213384 A	09-12-1982
			FR 2504156 A	22-10-1982
			HK 85586 A	21-11-1986
			IT 1147842 B	26-11-1986
			JP 1646513 C	13-03-1992
			JP 3010714 B	14-02-1991
			JP 57181379 A	08-11-1982
			NL 8201599 A,C	16-11-1982
			SE 457642 B	16-01-1989
			SE 8202372 A	17-10-1982
			ZA 8202435 A	25-05-1983
-----				
US 5393354	A	28-02-1995	US 5407749 A	18-04-1995
-----				
US 4149909	A	17-04-1979	AR 221353 A	30-01-1981
			AT 366722 B	10-05-1982
			AT 936178 A	15-09-1981
			AU 522077 B	13-05-1982
			AU 4302779 A	05-07-1979
			BE 873233 A	29-06-1979
			BR 7808565 A	28-08-1979
			CA 1124163 A	25-05-1982
			DE 2856765 A	05-07-1979
			EG 13872 A	30-09-1982
			FR 2413480 A	27-07-1979
			GB 2011954 A,B	18-07-1979
			JP 54128950 A	05-10-1979
			JP 60022064 B	30-05-1985
			NL 7812661 A	03-07-1979

EPO FORM P0459

For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 99 20 0045

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.  
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on  
The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

21-04-1999

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 4149909 A		NZ 189308 A	29-05-1981
		SE 7813463 A	01-07-1979
		ZA 7807355 A	27-12-1979
EP 0694593 A	31-01-1996	ES 2102313 A	16-07-1997
SU 1781316 A	15-12-1992	NONE	
SU 885353 B	30-11-1981	NONE	
FR 1300295 A	14-12-1962	NONE	
US 5415702 A	16-05-1995	NONE	

EPO FORM P0459

For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82

